

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MADRID 05420 01 OF 02 161945Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11  
/066 W

-----115888 162125Z /66

R 161913Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4617  
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS  
AMEMBASSY LISBON  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY OSLO  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE  
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MADRID 05420

BRUSSELS ALSO FOR USEEC

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, SP  
SUBJECT: MAY 17 SENATORIAL BY-ELECTIONS SEEN AS TEST  
OF STRENGTH

1. SUMMARY: THE MAY 17 SENATORIAL BY-ELECTIONS IN  
ASTURIAS AND ALICANTE WILL MAKE NO DIFFERENCE IN THE  
PARLIAMENTARY BALANCE OF POWER, AND AS TREND-SPOTTERS  
THEY ARE SUBJECT NOT ONLY TO THE USUAL CAVEATS FOR BY-  
ELECTIONS BUT TO THE ADDITIONAL PROBLEM THAT THE DATA  
BASE IS LIMITED TO THE JUNE 1977 TEST. THE MAJOR  
PARTIES ARE NEVERTHELESS MAKING A SUBSTANTIAL EFFORT,  
AND THE RESULTS WILL BE STUDIED CLOSELY FOR INDICATIONS  
OF GAINS AND LOSSES. THE OPPOSITION SOCIALIST PSOE IS  
A CLEAR FAVORITE IN BOTH PROVINCES, BUT THE GOVERNMENT  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MADRID 05420 01 OF 02 161945Z

UCD HAS HOPES OF PULLING AN UPSET, AT LEAST IN ALICANTE.  
END SUMMARY

2. ALTHOUGH BOTH DISTINCT AND DISTANT, NORTH-COAST  
ASTURIAS (OVIEDO) AND SOUTH-EAST-COAST ALICANTE SHOWED  
SIMILAR VOTING PATTERNS IN JUNE 1977, WITH THE PSOE  
EDGING THE UCD IN THE CONGRESS OF DEPUTIES RACE (THE

BEST MEASURE OF RELATIVE PARTY STRENGTH) BY 1.5-3 PERCENTAGE POINTS, AND THE PCE AND AP TRAILING. THE JUNE 1977 SENATE PICTURE WAS OBSCURED IN ASTURIAS BY THE JOINT CANDIDACY "SENATORS FOR DEMOCRACY", BACKED BY CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS, THE SOCIALISTS, AND THE COMMUNISTS; THAT TICKET TOOK THE FIRST THREE PLACES, AS DID SOCIALIST CANDIDATES FOR THE SENATE IN ALICANTE. THE UCD TOOK THE FOURTH SLOT IN EACH PROVINCE. THE BY-ELECTIONS ARE TO FILL THE VACANCIES CAUSED BY THE DEATH OF A PSOE SENATOR FROM ALICANTE AND THE RESIGNATION (FOR ILL HEALTH) OF THE COMMUNIST FROM ASTURIAS.

3. THE PSOE'S RECENT ABSORPTION OF THE MUCH SMALLER SOCIALIST PSP OF TIerno GALVAN SHOULD ADD TO ITS ADVANTAGE IN THESE RACES, ALTHOUGH THE TRANSFERABILITY OF THE PSP ELECTORATE IS QUESTIONABLE AND IS ONE OF THE ELEMENTS FOR WHICH THE RESULTS OF THESE ELECTIONS WILL BE STUDIED. HELPING TO GUARD AGAINST DISPERSION OF THE PSP VOTE IN ASTURIAS IS THE FACT THAT THE PSOE CANDIDATE THERE IS FERNANDO MORAN, A FORMER FOREIGN MINISTRY DIRECTOR GENERAL AND A PROMINENT PSP FIGURE. FURTHER WORRYING THE UCD ARE THE GENERAL JUDGMENTS THAT BY-ELECTIONS DRAW LESS OF A TURN-OUT, AFFECTING MORE THAN ANY OTHER THE UCD'S LESS IDEOLOGICAL, LESS COMMITTED CONSTITUENCY, AND THAT SUCH ELECTIONS NORMALLY OCCASION SOMETHING OF A PROTEST VOTE AGAINST WHOEVER IS IN CHARGE. CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MADRID 05420 01 OF 02 161945Z

4. AS THE CAMPAIGN HAS SHAPED UP, THE SYMMETRY OF THE SPANISH POLITICAL CURVE HAS DISPLAYED ITSELF ONCE AGAIN. THE TWO MAJOR PARTIES, WHILE ATTACKING EACH OTHER WITH MIRROR CHARGES OF BEING RESPECTIVELY "MARXIST" OR "RIGHTIST", HAVE ALSO FOUND THEMSELVES THE MAJOR TARGETS OF THEIR RESPECTIVE OUTSIDE FLANKERS, AS THE CONSERVATIVE AP AND THE PCE HAVE SOUGHT TO SHOW THAT THEY ARE NOT TO BE COUNTED OUT, AND CAN CAUSE SERIOUS DAMAGE IF GOADED INTO IT. AP LEADERS CLAIM CONFIDENCE THAT MOUNTING DISENCHANTMENT AMONG THE UCD'S MORE MODERATE CONSTITUENCY WILL RESULT IN AN APPRECIABLE ADVANCE FOR THEIR PARTY, WHILE THE PCE HAS BEEN PIQUED BY THE PSOE'S REFUSAL, IN THE CASE OF ASTURIAS, TO MAINTAIN THE JOINT CANDIDACY OF LAST JUNE. (THE PSOE, OBVIOUSLY MINDFUL OF THE DIFFERENCE TO ITS OWN IMAGE BETWEEN A PROBABLE WIN WITH A CANDIDATE OF ITS OWN, AND AN ALMOST CERTAIN LOSS IF IT TRIED TO BACK A COMMUNIST, EASILY TOOK THE POSITION THAT THE AGREEMENT IN QUESTION WAS FOR JUNE 1977 ONLY.)

5. WHILE THE OUTCOME OF THESE BY-ELECTIONS WILL HAVE

NO SIGNIFICANCE IN TERMS OF RELATIVE PARTY STRENGTH  
WITHIN THE SENATE (WHERE THE GOVERNMENT/UCD HAS A  
COMFORTABLE MARGIN), THE PARTIES CLEARLY FEEL THAT THE  
RESULTS IN TERMS OF PRESTIGE ARE IMPORTANT, AND THE  
END OF THE CAMPAIGN SAW TOP LEADERS FROM ALL THE MAJOR

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MADRID 05420 02 OF 02 161945Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11  
/066 W

-----115893 162128Z /66

R 161913Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4618  
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS  
AMEMBASSY LISBON  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY OSLO  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE  
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MADRID 05420

BRUSSELS ALSO FOR USEEC

PARTIES, INCLUDING (OVER THE WEEKEND) PRIME MINISTER  
SUAREZ, STUMP BOTH PROVINCES WITH A VIEW TO IMPROVING  
PARTY CHANCES. PSOE LEADERS, WHO HAVE BEEN FLATLY  
CONFIDENT OF VICTORY IN BOTH PROVINCES, ARE LOOKING  
FORWARD TO THE CONTRIBUTION SUCH AN OUTCOME COULD MAKE  
TO THE MOMENTUM THEY SEEK TO DEVELOP TO PROPEL THEIR  
PARTY INTO POWER. KEY UCD FIGURES, POINTING TO POLLS  
SHOWING THEIR PARTY ONLY A FEW POINTS BEHIND, HAVE  
HOPED THAT SUAREZ' LAST-MINUTE APPEARANCE WILL BE  
ENOUGH TO PUT THEM OVER THE TOP AND UPSET THE PSOE,  
AT LEAST IN ALICANTE. THE PSOE IS, HOWEVER, THE CLEAR  
FAVORITE. EATON

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 16 may 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1978MADRID05420  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D780207-0038  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** MADRID  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1978/newtext/t19780555/aaaabubv.tel  
**Line Count:** 166  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** ad4bc19c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 4  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 23 may 2005  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 2679581  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** MAY 17 SENATORIAL BY-ELECTIONS SEEN AS TEST OF STRENGTH  
**TAGS:** PINT, SP  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/ad4bc19c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014